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ABSTRACT

This manual from Austin Community College (ACC) (Texas) is a guide for faculty and administrators developing assessment criteria for their students, classes, or programs. It defines the five stages of ACC's assessment process: (1) stating the purpose, wherein the unit or department states its function within the larger context of the college's overall mission; (2) identifying the outcomes the unit intends to achieve and criteria it will use to determine whether those outcomes have been achieved; (3) assessing outcomes--defining the methods by which the unit will assess whether the outcomes criteria have been met and analyzing the data gathered by that methodology; (4) implementing improvements based on outcomes information; and (5) stating the impact the unit's improvements have made on the quality of what it does. Completing all five steps ends one assessment cycle; each successive year, the steps are completed again. The manual recommends that unit members: focus on assessment as a tool for improving the quality of students' educational experiences; add minimally to the already heavy workload, using existing data as much as possible; ensure that attention to institutional effectiveness efforts is not lost by identifying the responsibilities of all involved; and be sensitive to the implications of assessment. Contains a glossary of assessment terms, Bloom's Classification of Cognitive Skills, ACC's mission statement, and an assessment plan template. (EMH)

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AUSTIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Institutional Effectiveness
Assessment Planning Resource Manual

Fall 2000

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I. Outcomes Assessment:

Spiraling toward Excellence

- Defining desired outcomes
- Measuring achievement of these outcomes
- Using results to improve

(over...
and over...
and over again)

Goal

The ultimate goal of assessment is to pose questions and gather information to bring about improvement.

Austin Community College is committed to helping faculty, administrators, and staff find ways to ask and answer difficult questions about teaching and learning so that we can continue to improve the quality of education.

Assessment data is generated as we look for answers to questions such as:

? How do we know if our students are learning what we are teaching?

? How do we know if we are teaching what our students need to learn?

? How can we improve the educational success of all students regardless of their educational background, race, gender or ethnicity?

? How well do we prepare students for transfer or the job market?

? How can we get answers to those questions about student learning that test questions don't provide?

Underlying each of these questions is the assumption of a desire for educational excellence—excellence in learning, excellence in teaching, and excellence in supporting the teaching and learning process.

Principles

Assessment at ACC

- is faculty or staff driven. Faculty members identify learning outcomes, specify the means of assessment, and decide what to do with the results; staff identify outcomes for non-instructional units, specify the means of assessment, and decide what to do with the results,

- is an ongoing process. Instructors, as well as college services personnel, assess achievement of outcomes as a regular and annual event,

- continues after and apart from visits of accrediting agencies because the reason for assessment is improvement,

- refocuses institutional attention on quality,

- is not and should not be associated with faculty or staff evaluation,

- analyzes the learning process, not the individual student, faculty member, or course.

Levels of Assessment

Assessment at the Classroom Level

Assessment of student learning begins in the classroom. This is the setting in which, as the Latin root of the word assessment suggests, the teacher and student can sit beside each other to evaluate learning in a "conversation" that informs improvement. At the classroom level, instructors may employ Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATs) to determine the effectiveness of their instruction, i.e., the student learning outcomes that are being achieved.

Assessment at the Course or Program Level

At the unit level, a similar "conversation" occurs when faculty collaborate to identify, and then design assessment plans to evaluate, the critical learning outcomes students should be able to demonstrate as a result of completing the program/course. These assessment plans are documented in the Unit-Level Effectiveness Database.

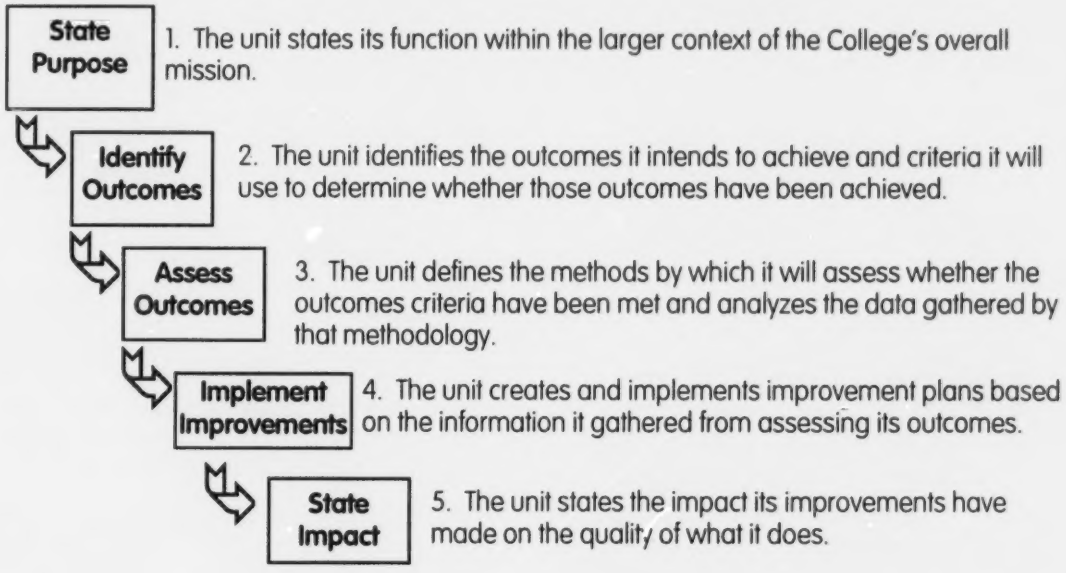
Assessment at the Institutional Level

And finally, at the institutional level, the "conversation about student learning" occurs in the evaluation of the effectiveness of college-wide functions such as transfer and workforce programs, retention, student services, and developmental and adult education. These comprise the college-wide effectiveness measures. Each is documented yearly in the publication of *Effectiveness Updates* as well as in the Unit-Level Effectiveness Database.

Common to all of these conversations is the belief that learning is what matters most to those of us in community college education. Because of this belief, we assess our effectiveness; we seek evidence of the degree to which learning is taking place; and we seek information to guide the steps we must take to improve what matters most to us—student learning.

Process

The purpose of the assessment process at ACC is to provide concrete information to enhance the quality of teaching and learning as well as the quality of services provided in support of teaching and learning. The process consists of five "steps," which comprise an ongoing opportunity for recursive improvement that supports our quest for excellence.


State Purpose
1. The unit states its function within the larger context of the College's overall mission.
Identify Outcomes
2. The unit identifies the outcomes it intends to achieve and criteria it will use to determine whether those outcomes have been achieved.
Assess Outcomes
3. The unit defines the methods by which it will assess whether the outcomes criteria have been met and analyzes the data gathered by that methodology.
Implement Improvements
4. The unit creates and implements improvement plans based on the information it gathered from assessing its outcomes.
State Impact
5. The unit states the impact its improvements have made on the quality of what it does.

These steps are dynamic and interactive. The unit's purpose is made concrete and specific in the outcomes it identifies. The outcomes, in turn, are directly addressed by the methods and criteria designed to demonstrate achievement of those outcomes, and improvements are implemented that impact the quality of the unit's function. Completing all five steps ends one assessment cycle. Each successive year, the steps are completed again. Using information and improvement plans from the previous year as the busis for assessment planning the following year creates a continuous quality improvement spiral that supports each unit's efforts to improve the educational experience of students at ACC.

Definitions

The following terms are defined as they are used in the assessment process at ACC.

Purpose: The unit's purpose is a broad statement identifying the major function of the unit.

> **EX 1:** The Legal Assistant Program consists of a sixty-six hour training program for those desiring to function as legal assistants (paralegals) in a law office or legal agency or section. Upon successful completion of the program, the student receives an Associate of Applied Science Degree as a Legal Assistant. Although students can transfer the degree to some four-year universities in order to obtain a baccalaureate, the program is designed to prepare students for immediate entry into the workforce. The purpose of the program is to prepare the student to function successfully as a legal assistant or paralegal in a law environment.

> **EX 2:** The purpose of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness is to coordinate the processes that lead to effective decision-making, college-wide. This involves serving College units by providing support in the design, data collection and analysis of activities assessing the effectiveness of the unit and the College; by coordinating and providing data for both operational and strategic planning activities; and by fulfilling College external reporting requirements for accreditation and funding.

Goal: A goal is a broad, future-oriented statement identifying what the unit is striving towards, hoping to become or proposes to do to fulfill its unit purpose. Goals are used primarily in policy making and planning.

> **EX 1:** The Legal Assistant Program will provide students with the necessary educational experiences to allow them to function successfully as a legal assistant or paralegal in a law environment.

> **EX 2:** The OIE will provide support to College units in the design, data collection and analysis of activities assessing the effectiveness of the unit and the College; will coordinate and provide data for both operational and strategic planning activities; and will fulfill College external reporting requirements for accreditation and funding.

Outcome: An outcome is the brief, clear statement identifying in **measurable** terms the **intended result** of processes and services of the unit. Outcomes focus on the specific performance(s) stakeholders are expected to demonstrate when the unit achieves its goal.

> **EX 1:** Students graduating from the ACC Legal Assistant Program will be prepared to function as entry-level legal assistants or paralegals.

> **EX 2:** Faculty and staff will have the information they need.

Criteria: A criterion is a statement of the specific standards that identify successful achievement of the intended outcome, including the data that will be used, who will demonstrate achievement of the outcome, when, under what conditions, and to what degree.

EX 1: 1a. Students taking the Internship Course during their last or next-to-last semester of the program will be evaluated by a potential employer as adequately prepared to function as an entry-level legal assistant.

1b. Less than 5% of the graduates of the Program will return to ACC to seek re-training in an area in which they completed a course with a grade of "C" or better.

EX 2: 95% of faculty and staff responding to the annual OIE evaluation survey will report they have used information from the OIE in making decisions affecting their program.

Methodology: The methodology is a description of the actions that must be taken to gather, analyze, and report the findings of the data that will be used to determine whether the outcome has been achieved and who is responsible for each.

EX 1: 1a. Employers of interns working in a law office or other legal environment are asked at the end of the internship to evaluate the intern's performance in nine different areas and to determine whether the intern is adequately "prepared to function as an entry-level legal assistant." The evaluation scale is 1 to 5, with 1 being "inadequate," 2 being "needs improvement," 3 being "adequate," 4 being "very good," and 5 being "superior."

1b. Records of any graduate seeking retraining are kept. A percentage comparing the number of graduates to the number of students seeking retraining will be calculated each semester.

EX 2: The Coordinator of Institutional Assessment will calculate the percentage of faculty and staff responding "yes" to the following survey item, "In the last year, have you used information from the OIE to make decisions regarding your program?"

Direct Indicator: Direct indicators of learning are immediately observable. Direct indicators of learning include pre-and post-testing; capstone courses; oral examinations; internships; portfolio assessments; evaluation of capstone projects; standardized national exams; locally developed tests; performance on licensure, certification, or professional exams; and juried reviews and performances.

Indirect Indicator: Indirect indicators of learning are subsequently observable. Indirect indicators might include information gathered from alumni, employers, and students; graduation rates; transfer studies, graduate follow-up studies; success of students in subsequent institutional settings; and job placement data.

Qualitative Assessment Tools: Qualitative assessment tools attempt to grasp the whole of a student's achievement with information which usually cannot be quantified or counted. However, when scoring rubrics (or criteria) are applied to qualitative assessments, they can provide quantitative data for program assessment.

Quantitative Assessment Tools: Quantitative assessment tools produce numerical data which can easily be aggregated to indicate program performance. Examples of assessment tools that provide quantitative data include standardized tests, locally-developed tests, licensure exams, surveys, etc.

Thoughts to Keep in Mind when Creating Assessment Plans

1. Focus on assessment as a tool for improving the quality of students' educational experiences.

2. Add minimally to the already heavy workload.
   - Stress those things that are essential and that will facilitate decisions that the program is prepared to make.
   - Collect only information that will be used.
   - Use existing data as much as possible.
   - Incorporate assessment procedures into routine operation of the functional unit.
   - Use a cycle of assessment so that every outcome is assessed within a 3 - 5 year period.
   - Coordinate surveying efforts.

3. Ensure that attention to institutional effectiveness efforts is not lost by identifying the responsibilities of all involved.

4. Be sensitive to the implications of assessment. Data reported insensitively may do more harm than good. Internally, results of assessment should be seen as formative, not punitive.

II. Documentation of Outcomes Assessment at ACC:

"How to...." for Instructional Units

Overview

This "How to" section is intended to provide assistance to instructional units as they begin the process of documenting their program's assessment plans. Documentation is entered into the Unit-Level Effectiveness Database at http://www2.austin.cc.tx.us./oiepub/unitlevel.htm. The user name for entering documentation into the database is **ACC Units** (two words) and the password is **unitgoals** (one word.)

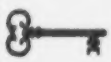
The format for this documentation includes the following **seven steps**:

1. Stating the purpose of the unit
2. Identifying the outcomes of instruction that indicate student learning
3. Defining the criteria that will determine whether the outcomes have been achieved
4. Identifying the methodology to be used to gather data identified in the criteria
5. Summarizing results
6. Reporting improvement actions to be (or that have been) taken based on the results.
7. And finally, reporting the impact of implemented improvements

In the pages that follow, each of these steps will be discussed, and the unit's answers to key questions (marked by this symbol (🗝) will identify the essential elements required for documentation of each step.

For additional assistance contact Roslyn Wallace (rwall@austin.cc.tx.us or 223-7585).

1. Purpose



- Why does the program exist?
- What does the program provide students?

The first step in any assessment plan is to **identify the purpose** or "mission" of the "unit" in terms of the function it fulfils within the College's mission. The units purpose is the foundation of the assessment plan and thus, provides the context for each of the steps in the assessment process.

Begin with the end in mind.

Take a moment and picture a clear bowl more than half filled with pebbles.

The bowl represents a typical week and the pebbles represent the little tasks that we can see we already have to do. Next to the bowl are some fist-sized river stones. These stones have labels on them with names such as Class, Study Time, Major Publication, Family, Sleep, and Grant Application. The task is to put the big rocks into the bowl so that the lid goes on. When faced with this task, most people attempt to wedge the big rocks into the little ones. This approach represents how most people try to achieve their week's work: They wedge important tasks into already scheduled smaller ones, rearranging the smaller ones around the bigger ones. In contrast, if presented with a second, empty bowl next to the first, a different paradigm arises. Now, people put the big rocks into the second bowl and then pour the pebbles in on top, where they fill in the empty spaces between the rocks. The lid goes on easily.

What do we learn from such an exercise? The metaphor permits many interpretations. I like this one: "BIG ROCKS GO IN FIRST." If the big rocks are put in at the beginning, they all fit...and even if the pebbles don't all get in, who cares? They're not "Big Rocks." When Big Rocks Go In First, every week is a success.

When people or agencies write down what their Really Big Rocks are over time, they create a document that is sometimes called a mission [purpose] statement. A mission statement illuminates the question, "Why are we here?" A statement of goals translates the mission statement into promises and actions. From an assessment perspective, it's a good idea to know what the Big Rocks are for our students---and to inform them about them, too!--- because these are what we care about and what we assess first.

"If you don't know where you're headed, you'll probably end up someplace else."

Douglas J Eder, Ph.D.

Picture the program for which you have responsibility. What Big Rocks related to student learning do you want to "go in first"? That is, what major goals do you wish your students to achieve under your guidance?

Faculty may spend a great deal of time coming to agreement on the mission/purpose statement, as each may have his/her own idea of the characteristics of a purpose statement—long, short, values oriented, a slogan. Keep the Big Rocks in mind, and come to conceptual agreement among members of the unit on who the unit serves, in what ways, and with what results. Keep in mind that usually the unit purpose is stated in the *Catalog* and follows the phrase, "prepares the student to...."

> **EX:** The Legal Assistant Program consists of a sixty-six hour training program for those desiring to function as legal assistants (paralegals) in a law office or legal agency or section. Upon successful completion of the Program, the student receives an Associate of Applied Science Degree as a Legal Assistant. Although students can transfer the degree to some four-year universities in order to obtain a baccalaureate, the Program is designed to prepare students for immediate entry into the workforce. The Purpose of the Program is to prepare the student to function successfully as a legal assistant or paralegal in a law environment.

- **Who does the unit serve?**

Obviously, the unit exists to serve students, but the mission/purpose statement should identify specific major stakeholders—those who will be effected by the activities of the unit—and "consumers" of the unit's unique "product." Employers, as well as four-year institutions, and even the community, may be stakeholders. The point is to focus the unit's attention on the people it intends to serve.

> **EX:** "those desiring to function as legal assistants (paralegals) in a law office or legal agency or section"

- **What unique product or service does the unit provide its stakeholders?**

The answer to this question identifies what the unit does and is the basis for its outcomes statements.

> **EX:** "consists of a sixty-six hour training program ....Upon successful completion of the Program, the student receives an Associate of Applied Science Degree as a Legal Assistant"

- **What is the result of the program?**

The answer to this question identifies what should be the result to the stakeholder when the unit accomplishes its mission/purpose. It is the "bottom line" for the unit and for its stakeholders.

> **EX:** "The program is designed to prepare students for immediate entry into the workforce"

Once the unit's purpose statement has been identified, enter it into the Unit-Level Effectiveness Database http://www2.austin.cc.tx.us./oiepub/unitlevel.htm. The User name for entering documentation into the database is **ACC Units** and the password is **unitgoals.**

Quality Check: Purpose Statement

- The purpose statement identifies the unit's major "stakeholders."
- The purpose statement identifies the unique "product" of the unit.
- The purpose statement identifies the major "task" of the unit.

2. Outcomes

- Who will demonstrate the results of the unit's achievement of its purpose?
- What specific behavior or action will demonstrate these results?
  - What will students know or be able to do?
  - What skills will students have acquired?
  - What attitudes, values, or interests will students demonstrate?
- When will the results be demonstrated?

Learning **outcomes** are the vehicle for determining whether the unit's purpose is being achieved. Outcomes information provides concrete, meaningful, and useful evidence of achievement of the unit's purpose, i.e., whether the unit is doing what it proposes to be doing. Well designed outcomes also provide information to direct improvement, if such is needed. Thus, a unit's instructional outcomes serve as the foundation for assessment planning. Outcomes statements

- provide direction to the program,
- communicate what the faculty in the program deem important,
- identify the intended **results** of the educational program,
- describe what students should be able to know, think, or do,
- describe the attitudes, values and skills to be acquired by completing an educational program,
- are indicators of the effectiveness of a program.

Outcomes statements are needed before appropriate assessment tools and procedures can be selected or designed. Having outcomes statements that are both clear and measurable greatly facilitates the identification of appropriate assessment techniques.

Essential Components of Learning Outcomes

The essential components of outcomes statements are described below. After a component is defined, the phrase that illustrates it will be extracted from the following outcomes statement:

> *After analyzing and interpreting information from public opinion polls, the graduating journalism major will be able to communicate the results to at least three different groups in written, oral, and graphic forms.*

Who will demonstrate results?

Specify subgroups.

- students majoring in the program
- students taking specific courses to meet requirements for other programs
- graduates of the program
- employers of program graduates

EX: *graduating journalism major* (student)

What specific behavior or action will demonstrate results?

Specify actions or behaviors that follow instruction and could serve as evidence that the objective has been achieved.

- Use action verbs
- Identify the "focus" of learning--content, concept, skill, attitude

Make sure the action or behavior is specific enough to be measurable.

EX: *communicate results in written, oral, and graphic forms to at least three different groups*

When will results be demonstrated?

Give information about situations in which the student will be required to demonstrate the behavior

- at the beginning and end of a course or the program
- following a specific course
- following graduation
- following a specific task

EX: *After analyzing and interpreting information from public opinion polls*

Outcomes vs. Goals

There may be a tendency to create outcomes that describe *instructional activities* (goals) rather than *student learning* (outcomes). Although goals and outcomes seem similar, some differences do exist.

Goals	Outcomes
broad, future-oriented statements	brief, clear statements of **results**
reflect what the program is striving towards or hoping to become	describe the desired learning/behaviors of students completing the program or course
refer to instructional processes/activities	refer to results of instructional processes/activities
used primarily in policy making and general program planning	used to assess effectiveness of curriculum and provide information for improvements

At a minimum, outcome statements should describe student behaviors and products that faculty would accept as evidence that learning was achieved, thus providing documentation of the effectiveness of the curriculum. Goal statements are helpful for directing instructional activities, but are sometimes too general, broad, or vague for developing specific tools to assess student learning. Goals provide the context for outcomes.

Development of Learning Outcomes

Often outcomes are readily available in the unit. However, they may need to be put into written form, revised, or updated. When outcomes statements do not already exist, there are a number of processes that can be used to identify and develop them.

- Examine mission and goal statements, as well as other materials that describe the program. A linkage should exist between the mission of the college and that of the unit. Likewise, there should be a connection between a unit's purpose and the outcomes of the program.

- Use faculty discussion sessions and/or surveys. This can be done in a couple of ways. The obvious one is to ask faculty what students should be able to do before they complete the program. Another way would be to ask faculty to visualize the ideal student that has just completed the program. Then ask them to describe what the student knows (cognitive), can do (cognitive, psychomotor), and cares about (affective). Finally, faculty could discuss what achievements are expected of students that have completed the program.

- Collect and review outcomes from similar programs and external sources. This is one way to determine what is distinctive about a particular program. Discipline-specific professional societies and accrediting bodies can be good sources of outcomes . Before adopting an outcome from an external source, the faculty should determine whether the outcome is appropriate for their program based on the student characteristics, resources, curriculum, etc., associated with the program.

- Use focus group discussions and surveys. Ask students (entering and current) what their expectations and goals are. Alumni could be asked to describe what they felt they gained from the program. Both alumni and employers could be asked what outcomes they feel are important for the future employment of the program's graduates. By consulting these groups, faculty broaden their information base for identifying outcomes, and the groups may be more motivated to participate in other evaluation/assessment activities.

- Describe the ideal student in your program at various phases throughout your program. Be concrete and focus on those strengths, skills, and values that you feel are the result of, or at least supported and nurtured by, the program experience. Then ask: *What does this student know? What can this student do? What does this student care about?*

- List and briefly describe the program experiences that contribute most to the development of the ideal student.

- List the achievements you implicitly expect of graduates in each major field.

- Describe your alumni in terms of such achievements as career accomplishments, lifestyles, citizenship activities, and aesthetic and intellectual involvement.
- Collect and review instructional materials. Try sorting materials into 3 broad categories: recognition/recall, comprehension/simple application, critical thinking/ problem-solving.

Use any of the following: syllabi and course outlines, course assignments and tests, textbooks (especially the tables of contents, introductions, and summaries).

- Collect and review documents that describe your department and its programs: brochures and catalog descriptions, accreditation reports, curriculum committee reports, mission statements.

These activities should result in a plethora of possible outcomes to assess the effectiveness of the unit. It is suggested, however, that only three to five objectives be assessed each year. Reasons for this limitation are primarily based on the availability of resources—time, staff, ability of the unit to address the results of assessing the outcomes, etc. To refine or reduce a set of outcome statements, use the 25 percent problem. Imagine that you want to reduce program or course material by 25 percent. What outcomes would you keep and which would you discard?

Select outcomes that

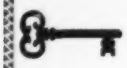
- faculty agree are the most important,
- have the potential to make a difference in how the unit functions,
- will yield information that will help a unit learn about and improve itself,
- will insure the assessment plan will actually be implemented.

When the unit's outcomes have been identified, enter them into the Unit-Level Effectiveness Database at http://www2.austin.cc.tx.us./oiepub/unitlevel.htm. The User name for entering documentation into the database is **ACC Units** (two words) and the password is **unitgoals** (one word.) Deadline for entering documentation into the ULE Database is June 15 of each year.

Quality Check: Outcomes Statements

- The outcome describes a learning result rather than a teaching process.
- The outcome describes what the student will be able to demonstrate.
- The outcome is measurable.
- The outcome is specific.
- The outcome addresses no more than a single result (uses no conjunctions!).
- The outcome uses action verbs that specify definite, observable behaviors.
- The outcome is clear: faculty, students, administrators, and people outside the unit are able to understand it.
- The outcome is validated by departmental colleagues.
- The outcome is clearly linked to unit goals.
- The outcome is reasonable, given the ability of the students.

3. Criteria



- Who will demonstrate results?
- When will results be demonstrated?
- What specific behavior or action will demonstrate results?
- How will results be demonstrated?
- What level of achievement is acceptable to identify success?

Outcomes identify the results students will demonstrate. **Criteria** delineate the specific standards and parameters the unit has imposed on the outcome and serve to direct the collection of data. It is crucial to identify the specific data needed to determine whether the outcome has been achieved—1) who, 2) when, 3) what, 4) how, and 5) how much. These five elements are essential in writing a useful criterion statement. Until this step is completed, data cannot be gathered to provide information regarding the effectiveness of the unit and the actions it must undertake to improve.

Who will demonstrate results?

The criteria must identify the persons whose performance will be measured to determine whether the outcome has been achieved. Students majoring in the program, students taking specific courses to meet requirements for other programs, graduates of the program, employers of graduates, etc., each are possible groups whose performance would demonstrate achievement of an outcome.

When will results be demonstrated?

When results will be demonstrated depends on the outcome that is being assessed. If end-of-program outcomes are being assessed, then the results could be demonstrated at the end of the program or following graduation. If the outcome is about performance of graduates in transfer institutions or the workforce, the results must be demonstrated after students have transferred or been employed. If the outcome examines change over time, the results may need to be demonstrated both at the beginning and end of the course/program. If a specific skill or task demonstrates achievement of the outcome, the results could be demonstrated following the time that skill or task is expected to be mastered. The criteria must specify a time when results will be demonstrated.

What specific behavior or action will demonstrate results?

The criteria must specify the performance that determines achievement of the outcome. Will students take a test, complete a survey, perform a task? Use action verbs to describe the results that will demonstrate achievement of the outcome. Specify the focus of learning—content, concept, skill, attitude.

What level of performance is acceptable to identify successful achievement of the outcome?

The acceptable level of performance that identifies achievement of the outcome is usually a numeric expression, such as a percentage. Additionally, the level of success that is acceptable must be realistic, i.e., achievable by the persons being assessed and still challenging. There is

no minimum required level of achievement to identify success--that is the judgment of the faculty members who identify the outcome and criteria. However, performance levels should reflect what OUR students can do. "100% surpassing national norms" is too high and unrealistic, "25% of a national norm" is so low as to be suspect.

There are several types of standards for determining successful achievement of an outcome. (NOTE: In the examples below, the numbers identify each of the elements of the criterion statement: 1. who, 2. when, 3. what, 4. how, and 5. how much.)

One type of standard might be a percentage of students projected to achieve some specified level of performance. For example, it is quite acceptable for an *outcomes* statement to say, "graduates of XXXX will be successfully employed in the field", but the *criteria* MUST specify what will identify success in achieving this outcome. For example: "80% (5) of the graduates of XXXX program (1) will report employment in the field (3) on the survey (4) distributed one year after graduation (2)."

Another standard might be a comparison of the level of one group's performance with another, either within the college or externally. For example, "The average score (3) of the graduates of XXXX program (1) on the national XXXX exams (4) administered each spring (2) will be ±2% of the 50th percentile compared to the national results.(5) "

Still another standard of successful achievement of an outcome might be performance in subsequent endeavors (courses, programs, employment). Examples include, "90% (5) of those students responding (1) to a follow-up survey (4) one year after transfer (2) will respond that all of their ACC courses were accepted as prerequisites, (3)" and "75% (5) of students completing developmental math with a grade of 'C' or better (1) will, within two years (2), complete college algebra, trigonometry, or topics in math with a grade of 'C' or better (3 & 4)."

In some cases, a program may be unable to establish specific criteria before implementing an assessment plan. In such cases, the criteria may state something like this, "The first two cycles of this assessment will be used to establish base-line criteria for success."

It is important that there be more than one criterion identified for each outcome. No single criterion provides a complete view of a single outcome . For example, both a standardized test (if available for that program) and a survey of student attitudes which asked if students 'felt well-prepared' might assess a 'knowledge-of-the-field' outcome.

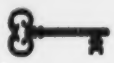
It is equally important that the data to be gathered is, in fact, available. Nothing frustrates completion of an assessment plan more than delineating specific standards only to discover there is no way to collect the data required for demonstrating those standards. Defining criteria that will require the creation of elaborate data collection methods should be undertaken only after a serious consideration of costs, benefits, and feasibility.

When the criteria have been delineated, enter them into the Unit-Level Effectiveness Database at http://www2.austin.cc.tx.us./oiepub/unitlevel.htm. The User name for entering documentation into the database is **ACC Units** (two words) and the password is **unitgoals** (one word).

Quality Check: Criterion Statements

- The criterion statement identifies who will demonstrate the outcome.
- The criterion statement identifies when the outcome will be demonstrated.
- The criterion statement identifies what behavior or action will demonstrate the outcome.
- The criterion statement identifies how the outcome will be demonstrated.
- The criterion statement identifies the level of performance that is necessary to determine successful achievement of the outcome.

4. Methodology



- What "tool" will be used to collect the data?
- When will the data be collected?
- How will the data be analyzed?
- How and to whom will the data be reported?
- Who will be responsible?

The *Criteria* have identified the data necessary for determining whether the outcomes have been achieved. The *Methodology* moves assessment from planning to implementation. It is the "recipe" for collecting the data. It describes the actions that must be taken (and by whom) to determine whether the criteria have been met. Together, the criteria and methodology provide the means with which to adequately, accurately, and specifically document achievement of the outcomes.

Methodology statements identify

- which tools will be used to gather the data
- which data will be gathered, by whom, how and when
- what will be done with the data once they have been gathered.

In describing the methodology, keep in mind assessment is concerned with the aggregate performance of a group of students rather than individual students. Also, consider what data are readily available in the department or college.

And, especially remember, *"You can't fix in analysis what you bungled in design,"* Richard Light, *By Design.*

Which tools or instruments will be used to collect the data identified in the criteria?

Adopt, adapt or construct. It may be possible, after serious review, for a unit to adopt a commercially available instrument to use for assessing its outcomes. Another alternative would be to adapt instruments from another area or use. In many cases, the best solution to insure fit between an instrument and a unit's needs involves the construction of an instrument, whether it is a local test or a questionnaire.

The only way to determine how useful a tool will be for measuring an outcome of a particular unit is to pilot test it. In a sense, all assessment is a pilot test of the methodology being used. Some evaluation of the methodology's utility occurs, informally if not formally, each time the assessment cycle is completed, and the unit learns whether the methodology actually provided the data needed to determine successful achievement of the outcome.

A variety of data collection methods may be used. The methodology should include at least one direct measure of learning for each outcome. A direct indicator of learning is immediately observable.

Direct indicators of learning include

- d pre-and post-testing,
- d capstone courses,
- d oral examinations,
- d internships,
- d portfolio assessments,
- d evaluation of capstone projects,
- d standardized national exams,
- d locally developed tests,
- d performance on licensure, certification, or professional exams,
- d juried reviews and performances.

An indirect measure of learning may be included in the methodology as a second assessment technique. Indirect indicators of learning are subsequently observable. **Indirect** indicators might include

- i information gathered from alumni, employers, and students
- i graduation rates
- i transfer studies
- i graduate follow-up studies
- i success of students in subsequent institutional settings
- i job placement data

There are many, many, many tools available for collecting assessment data. Following is a list of commonly used assessment tools for programs and courses. The list is not exhaustive and is not a shopping list; that is, departments are urged to create and use assessment tools which are NOT on the list whenever the new creation is better suited to measuring the outcome they have identified.

Qualitative Assessment Tools

These assessment tools try to grasp the whole of a student's achievement with information which usually cannot be quantified and/or counted. Typically these tools are scored using scoring rubrics.

- Portfolio - Each student would create a portfolio with the same ingredients and the same elements in each would be reviewed.
- Public Performance - In art or music each student might have a culminating product or

performance and, with some creative thought, students might be evaluated in other fields by different forms of performance, e.g., participation in student elections, volunteer work, clinicals, practice-teaching, etc.

- Juried Competition - Here there would need to be outsiders, e.g. a panel of colleagues from another institution or employers.

- Interviews - These can be especially useful for college services, where student perception of advice/help received can demonstrate performance.

Quantitative Assessment Tools

These tools have the advantage of producing numerical data which can be easily aggregated to indicate program performance.

- Standardized Tests - These have the advantage of instant credibility but are not available for all programs and disciplines and, more importantly, may not cover what is done in the program. They are also expensive.

- Locally-developed Tests - These allow a department to tailor the test to the actual content of a program or course and let the faculty later pinpoint just what students aren't achieving, but they take a lot of faculty time and may lack credibility. However, they can be useful in conjunction with other means of assessment.

- Licensure Exams - CPA, nursing board, and similar exams are excellent measures of a program's effectiveness.

- Surveys - Sent to former students, these can provide measures of employment, indicators of student satisfaction with training received, self-evaluation of competency, etc. Sent to employers, they can produce evaluations of student skills, attitudes, and knowledge and employer willingness to hire our students in the future.

- Tracking Data from Transfer Institutions - Texas A&M has provided "Foundation Course Tracking" reports to ACC in the past and hopefully will continue to do so in future. These data provide information on the performance of students who take a foundation course at ACC, then transfer to TAMU and take the target course associated with the foundation course.

- Observational - This assessment tool involves a particular kind of knowledge-based performance, where the assessment is a matter of observing (or counting) how many students successfully performed some product of learning (assuming it is required of all students in that program or course.) Examples would include creating an executable computer program, publishing a journal article, etc.

When will the data be collected?

Timing the collection of data is critical. Consider the rhythm of the academic year when deciding when to collect data. For example, surveys conducted around the time of holidays tend

to have poor response rates. Likewise, the sometime during the last few weeks of a semester would be the best time to collect end-of-course performance data.

- **How will the data be analyzed?**

Consider whether the data will have inherent meaning or be meaningful only when compared against other data, benchmarks, baselines, etc. Also consider whether the analysis of data will be done within the unit or will need to be done by an external agent. These decisions will impact the time it takes to translate the data the unit has gathered into useable information.

- **How and to whom will data be reported?**

Obviously, if the assessment results are to be used to make improvements in instruction, they need to be reported to those who are responsible for creating and implementing those improvements. These people need to be identified. Be sensitive to the implications of assessment. Data reported insensitively may do more harm than good. Internally, results of assessment should be seen as formative, not punitive.

- **Who will be responsible for collecting the data specified in the criteria?**

The unit should identify someone to "conduct" the assessment. If a "home-made" instrument is to be used to collect data, who will create it? Who will administer it? If data available elsewhere in the College is to be used, who will request/obtain it? Who will analyze the data and report the findings? Who will act on the information to make improvements? The unit must assign each of these actions to someone (and notify them of the assignment). Without this step, the assessment of outcomes becomes an empty exercise that has used faculty time but provided nothing useable in return.

When the unit's methodology has been identified, enter it into the Unit-Level Effectiveness Database at http://www2.austin.cc.tx.us./oiepub/unitlevel.htm. The User name for entering documentation into the database is **ACC Units** (two words) and the password is **unitgoals** (one word.) Documentation ensures the same methodology is used each time the outcome is assessed, thus allowing for trend analysis in future years. The deadline for entering documentation into the ULE Database is June 15 of each year.

Quality Check: Methodology

- The methodology identifies who will be responsible for conducting the assessment.
- The methodology identifies when the data will be collected .
- The methodology identifies what tool will be used to collect data.
- The methodology identifies how the data will be analyzed.
- The methodology identifies how and to whom the results of the analysis will be reported.

5. Results

- What did the unit find out?
- Were the criteria met?
- What do these findings mean to the unit?
- What problems need to be addressed?
- What successes were identified?

What did the unit find out?

Once the methodology has been implemented and the unit has received the results of the assessment, those results should be documented into the Unit-Level Effectiveness Database. The results need not be full-blown reports; they should be a summary of the findings. For example, "Seventy percent (70%) responded they were satisfied" or "The average was at the 48th percentile" are sufficient. Because the criteria were stated in specific terms, the results need only be reported in the terms specified in the criteria.

What do these findings mean to the unit?

It is important that the meaning the unit makes of the finding also be included in the statement of results. Again, there is no need to write a dissertation. A brief statement or two indicating the significance of the findings to the unit is all that is necessary. For example, "These results indicate students are not retaining information from the foundation course."

The results and their meaning should be documented into the Unit-Level Effectiveness Database at http://www2.austin.cc.tx.us./oiepub/unitlevel.htm as soon as they have been made available. The deadline for entering documentation of results into the ULE Database is June 15 of each year. The User name for entering documentation into the database is **ACC Units** (two words) and the password is **unitgoals** (one word.)

6. Improvements

- What will the unit do regarding the assessed outcome?
- What changes need to be made?
- What other data are needed to make improvements?
- What resources are needed to make improvements?
- When will changes be made, and who is responsible?

This step is where the assessment process comes full circle; where the assessment plan begins to "pay off." If the criteria were clear, each result should indicate that the level of learning intended to take place either is or is not being achieved.

What will the unit do to address the results of their assessment of the outcome?

If the findings indicate the criteria have been met or surpassed, the unit may decide that no change is needed and report "Outcome will be assessed once more next year to validate results." Then when the outcome is assessed again and the results are repeated, the unit should move on to assess another outcome.

On the other hand, if the findings indicate the criteria have not been met, the results of the assessment must be examined further.

> For example, the results may, in the judgment of the faculty, indicate a weakness in the unit in a very specific area where changing X will correct the problem. Assuming change X is implemented, the unit would report, "Change X undertaken." The outcome would be assessed again the following year using the same methodology to discover whether the change improved achievement.
>
> Another example, however, would be that the results indicate a weakness, but it is not obvious where or what change is needed. In this case, the improvement plan might be to establish a committee to examine the situation and report at a later date. The unit would report something along the lines of. "committee appointed to review W." Once the committee made its report (before the next assessment cycle) a more detailed improvement plan would be drafted, and the outcome would be assessed again.
>
> If after a second and third assessment cycle the unit is still not achieving the outcomes it expects, it is time to examine the outcome (to see if it is realistic), the criteria (to see if it is reasonable), and the methodology (to see if it is reliable).

Action plans for implementing improvements, including timelines and task assignments, should be documented into the Unit-Level Effectiveness Database at http://www2.austin.cc.tx.us./oiepub/unitlevel.htm. The User name for entering documentation into the database is **ACC Units** and the password is **unitgoals.** The deadline for documenting improvement plans is June 15 of each year.

7. Impact

- What is different as a result of the improvements?

This is the "dessert" of the assessment process. The unit looks back to see how far it has come in its quest for quality. The impact statement makes the value of the assessment process visible—not only to the unit, but to everyone.

How has the unit changed as a result of the improvement actions taken by the unit?

If the unit changed curriculum, the Impact statement is simply a statement of how that has effected student or faculty performance. Sometimes, however, there are unexpected and presumably unrelated changes as a result of improvement actions. For example, if an improvement action included surveying employers for input into skills they wished graduates of the program were more proficient in, an unexpected impact of implementing that improvement might be closer relationships with those employers in other ways as well.

Documentation of the impact of the improvement actions should take place a year following the identification of the outcome. Documentation is entered into the Unit-Level Effectiveness Database at http://www2.austin.cc.tx.us/oiepub/unitlevel.htm. The User name for entering documentation into the database is **ACC Units** (two words) and the password is **unitgoals** (one word.) The deadline for entering documentation into the ULE Database is June 15 of each year.

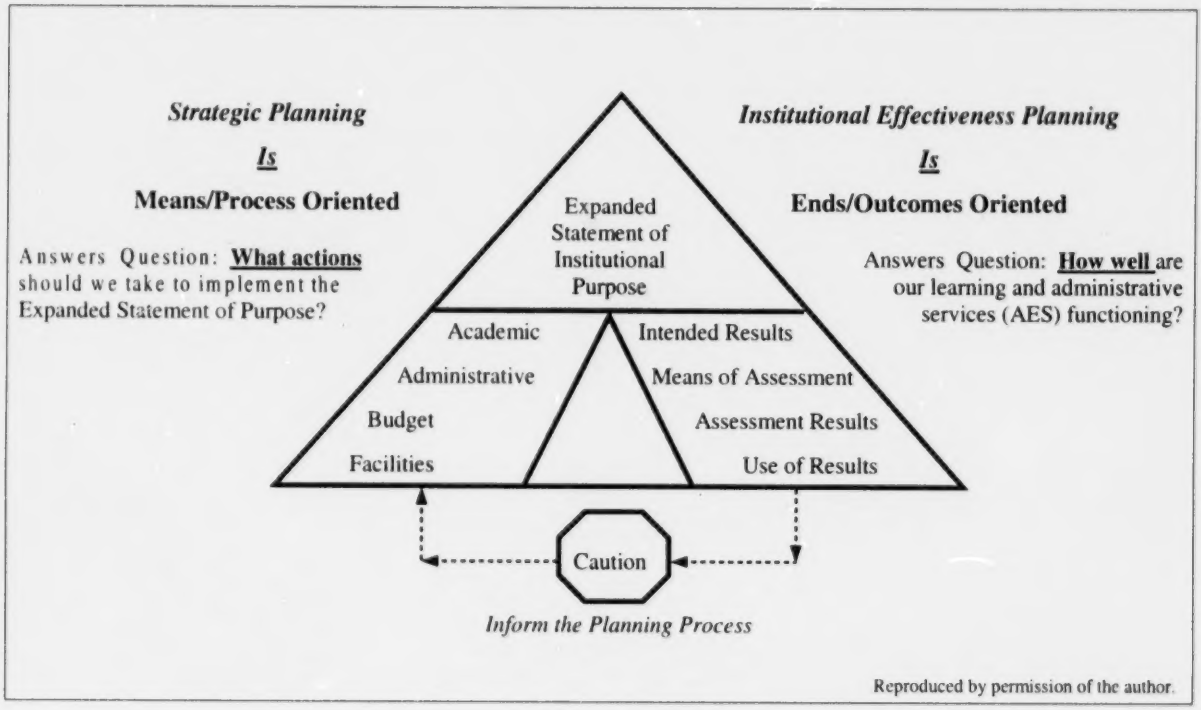
III. Outcomes Assessment

Appendices

The Relationship of Types of Planning at an Institution

From *The Departmental Guide and Record Book for Student Outcomes Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness* by Karen W. Nichols and James O. Nichols

In constructing statements of student learning outcomes, it is often difficult to make a differentiation between process/input statements and outcomes/results statements. Karen Nichols in her book, *The Departmental Guide and Record Book for Student Outcomes Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness,* makes the distinction clear.



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Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning

From The Association for the Advancement of Higher Education (AAHE) Assessment Forum

1. **The assessment of student learning begins with educational values.** Assessment is not an end in itself but a vehicle for educational improvement. Its effective practice, then, begins with and enacts a vision of the kinds of learning we most value for students and strive to help them achieve. Educational values should drive not only what we choose to assess but also how we do so. Where questions about educational mission and values are skipped over, assessment threatens to be an exercise in measuring what's easy, rather than a process of improving what we really care about.

2. **Assessment is most effective when it reflects an understanding of learning as multidimensional, integrated, and revealed in performance over time.** Learning is a complex process. It entails not only what students know but what they can do with what they know; it involves not only knowledge and abilities but values, attitudes, and habits of mind that affect both academic success and performance beyond the classroom. Assessment should reflect these understandings by employing a diverse array of methods, including those that call for actual performance, using them over time so as to reveal change, growth, and increasing degrees of integration. Such an approach aims for a more complete and accurate picture of learning, and therefore firmer bases for improving our students' educational experience.

3. **Assessment works best when the programs it seeks to improve have clear, explicitly stated purposes.** Assessment is a goal-oriented process. It entails comparing educational performance with educational purposes and expectations -- those derived from the institution's mission, from faculty intentions in program and course design, and from knowledge of students' own goals. Where program purposes lack specificity or agreement, assessment as a process pushes a campus toward clarity about where to aim and what standards to apply; assessment also prompts attention to where and how program goals will be taught and learned. Clear, shared, implementable goals are the cornerstone for assessment that is focused and useful.

4. **Assessment requires attention to outcomes but also and equally to the experiences that lead to those outcomes.** Information about outcomes is of high importance; where students "end up" matters greatly. But to improve outcomes, we need to know about student experience along the way -- about the curricula, teaching, and kind of student effort that lead to particular outcomes. Assessment can help us understand which students learn best under what conditions; with such knowledge comes the capacity to improve the whole of their learning.

5. **Assessment works best when it is ongoing not episodic.** Assessment is a process whose power is cumulative. Though isolated, "one-shot" assessment can be better than none, improvement is best fostered when assessment entails a linked series of activities undertaken over time. This may mean tracking the process of individual students, or of

cohorts of students; it may mean collecting the same examples of student performance or using the same instrument semester after semester. The point is to monitor progress toward intended goals in a spirit of continous improvement. Along the way, the assessment process itself should be evaluated and refined in light of emerging insights.

6. **Assessment fosters wider improvement when representatives from across the educational community are involved.** Student learning is a campus-wide responsibility, and assessment is a way of enacting that responsibility. Thus, while assessment efforts may start small, the aim over time is to involve people from across the educational community. Faculty play an especially important role, but assessment's questions can't be fully addressed without participation by student-affairs educators, librarians, administrators, and students. Assessment may also involve individuals from beyond the campus (alumni/ae, trustees, employers) whose experience can enrich the sense of appropriate aims and standards for learning. Thus understood, assessment is not a task for small groups of experts but a collaborative activity; its aim is wider, better-informed attention to student learning by all parties with a stake in its improvement.

7. **Assessment makes a difference when it begins with issues of use and illuminates questions that people really care about.** Assessment recognizes the value of information in the process of improvement. But to be useful, information must be connected to issues or questions that people really care about. This implies assessment approaches that produce evidence that relevant parties will find credible, suggestive, and applicable to decisions that need to be made. It means thinking in advance about how the information will be used, and by whom. The point of assessment is not to gather data and return "results"; it is a process that starts with the questions of decision-makers, that involves them in the gathering and interpreting of data, and that informs and helps guide continuous improvement.

8. **Assessment is most likely to lead to improvement when it is part of a larger set of conditions that promote change.** Assessment alone changes little. Its greatest contribution comes on campuses where the quality of teaching and learning is visibly valued and worked at. On such campuses, the push to improve educational performance is a visible and primary goal of leadership; improving the quality of undergraduate education is central to the institution's planning, budgeting, and personnel decisions. On such campuses, information about learning outcomes is seen as an integral part of decision making, and avidly sought.

9. **Through assessment, educators meet responsibilities to students and to the public. There is a compelling public stake in education.** As educators, we have a responsibility to the publics that support or depend on us to provide information about the ways in which our students meet goals and expectations. But that responsibility goes beyond the reporting of such information; our deeper obligation -- to ourselves, our students, and society -- is to improve. Those to whom educators are accountable have a corresponding obligation to support such attempts at improvement.

Authors: Alexander W. Astin; Trudy W. Banta; K. Patricia Cross; Elaine El-Khawas; Peter T. Ewell; Pat Hutchings; Theodore J. Marchese; Kay M. McClenney; Marcia Mentkowski; Margaret A. Miller; E. Thomas Moran; Barbara D. Wright. This document was developed under the auspices of the AAHE Assessment Forum with support from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education with additional support for publication and dissemination from the Exxon Education Foundation. Copies may be made without restriction.

Types of Learning Outcomes to Consider

adapted from Ball State University Assessment Workbook, 1992
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L. F. Gronlund, in *Stating Objectives for Classroom Instruction* (1991), provided the following list of types of outcomes. The list delineates many of the major areas in which instructional objectives might be produced. The specific categories were intended to be suggestive, not exclusive.

Knowledge

- Terminology
- Specific facts
- Concepts and principles
- Methods and procedures

Application

- Factual information
- Concepts and principles
- Methods and procedures
- Problem-solving skills

Thinking skills

- Critical thinking
- Scientific thinking

Appreciation

- Literature, art, music

Understanding

- Concepts and principles
- Methods and procedures
- Written material, graphs, maps, and numerical data
- Problem situations

General skills

- Laboratory skills
- Performance skills
- Communication skills
- Social skills
- Computational skills

Attitudes

- Social attitudes
- Scientific attitudes

Bloom's Classification of Cognitive Skills

from Ball State University Assessment Workbook, 1992
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Bloom's classification of cognitive skills is widely used in instructional planning. The six categories are arranged by level of complexity. Use of this or other classification systems is recommended to safeguard against a tendency to focus on content coverage and to ignore what students should learn to do with content.

Category	Definition	Related Behaviors
Knowledge	Recalling or remembering something without necessarily understanding, using, or changing it.	Define, describe, identify, label, list, match, memorize, point to, recall, select, state
Comprehension	Understanding something that has been communicated without necessarily relating it to anything else.	Alter, account for, annotate, calculate, change, convert, group, explain, generalize, give examples, infer, interpret, paraphrase, predict, review, summarize, translate
Application	Using a general concept to solve problems in a particular situation; using learned material in new and concrete situations.	Apply, adopt, collect, construct, demonstrate, discover, illustrate, interview, make use of, manipulate, relate, show, solve, use
Analysis	Breaking something down into its parts; may focus on identification of parts or analysis of relationships between parts, or recognition of organizational principles.	Analyze, compare, contrast, diagram, differentiate, dissect, distinguish, identify, illustrate, infer, outline, point out, select, separate, sort, subdivide
Synthesis	Creating something new by putting parts of different ideas together to make a whole.	Blend, build, change, combine, compile, compose, conceive, create, design, formulate, generate, hypothesize, plan, predict, produce, reorder, revise, tell, write
Evaluation	Judging the value of material or methods as they might be applied in a particular situation; judging with the use of definite criteria.	Accept, appraise, assess, arbitrate, award, choose, conclude, criticize, defend, evaluate, grade, judge, prioritize, recommend, referee, reject, select, support

Austin Community College Mission Statement

Austin Community College is an educational institution committed to challenging the human mind to explore new ideas and seek new opportunities. The College mission is to provide a wide range of high quality educational services that meet the needs of our willing partners in learning, both those who seek our services and those whom we must seek out.

Austin Community College operates on the belief that open access to quality postsecondary educational experiences is vital in a rapidly changing democratic society. Therefore, the College exists to provide such educational opportunities to all the people of the Austin Community College service area. Hence, Austin Community College maintains an "open door" admissions policy, offers a comprehensive variety of postsecondary educational programs, and actively seeks to eliminate barriers in the educational process.

A. Types of Programs

Austin Community College offers the following types of programs, services, and instruction to fulfill its mission and to satisfy state law for public junior and community colleges:

[a] Vocational and technical programs of varying lengths leading to certificates or degrees.

[b] Freshman- and sophomore-level academic courses leading to an associate degree or serving as the base of a baccalaureate degree program at a four-year institution.

[c] Continuing adult education for academic, occupational, professional, and cultural enhancement.

[d] Special instructional programs and tutorial service to assist underprepared students and others who wish special assistance to achieve their educational goals.

[e] A continuing program of counseling and advising designed to assist students in achieving their individual educational and occupational goals.

[f] A program of technology, library, media, and testing services to support instruction.

[g] Contracted instructional programs and services for area employers that promote economic development.

B. Intended Results

[1] The basic result to be produced by the College, in conjunction with other community sectors, is that all service-area adults legally qualified for College services have the post-secondary and higher education they need and can use for productive, successful lives. How close the local community is to this goal is a central accountability indicator for the College. However, declaration of this goal is not a guarantee of par-

ticular services, program admissions, or resource allocations; these are decided through the program-review, admissions, and budget processes.

[2] Accredited preparation shall be provided for as many career areas and university-transfer options within the mission of the College as is feasible. Emphasis shall be placed on providing post-secondary education (including needed preparation) to people who are educationally disadvantaged or are not well-served by other colleges, and on preparation for family-wage careers (either directly or after further higher education).

[3] In addition to mastery of the specific subject-area knowledge and skills needed to meet their education-related goals, students completing College programs shall have the general skills needed for success in employment and higher education: these include dependability, effective communication, gathering and critically assessing information, problem-solving, teamwork, leadership, and a focus on producing results of high quality.

[4] The College shall organize its activities so as to produce as high a level of overall value for the community as possible, and shall avoid procedures that waste the money or time of students or staff.

[5] The College shall create a good place to work, to learn, and to otherwise experience the higher-education process.

The Austin Community College Board of Trustees adopted this policy on February 13, 1973, and amended it on March 4, 1974, September 2, 1975, January 18, 1982, September 24, 1984, February 3, 1997, and May 1, 2000.

College-Wide Effectiveness Assessment Plans

At the institutional level, the conversation about student learning takes place within the context of college-wide functions. Effectiveness measures for these functions provide evidence of the degree to which the outcomes promised in the institution's mission statement are being achieved. According to its mission statement, ACC provides vocational and technical programs leading to degrees, certificates, and jobs; freshman and sophomore courses in the arts and sciences; continuing adult education; compensatory education programs (developmental education courses and adult basic education); and assistance to students to help them achieve their educational goals. The Effectiveness Measures for these functions are presented here. Most were defined by the President's Effectiveness Council, composed primarily of faculty. However, some still in "draft" status are currently under discussion in several College Councils.

Each year, for each college-wide function, data defined in the methodology are collected, analyzed, and the results presented in an Office of Institutional Effectiveness publication, *Effectiveness Update*, as well as posted to the OIE web site (http://www2.austin.cc.tx.us/oiepub). Additionally, as the data are reviewed, the measures themselves may be revised to provide more useful information for these college-wide conversations about student learning.

Workforce Education Effectiveness Measures

Purpose: To prepare students for employment in industry and business.
Approved by President's Effectiveness Council, January 1998

Intended Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Methodology
1. Students in workforce education programs will meet their educational goals.		
1A. Associate degree seekers	Analysis of student data will indicate that [of] workforce students who indicate their educational objective at entry is to "Complete an associate's degree," 10% will complete a degree within 6 years. Of those who do not complete a degree, 50% will achieve a certificate or marketable skills achievement award.	Longitudinal analysis of student intent data and program/course completion data.
1B. Certificate seekers	Analysis of student data will indicate that [of] workforce students who indicate their educational objective at entry is to "Complete a certificate," 10% will do so within 6 years. Of those who do not complete a certificate, 50% will achieve a degree or marketable skills achievement award.	Longitudinal analysis of student intent data and program/course completion data.
1C. Non-graduates	Analysis of student data will indicate that 90% of non-degree seeking students who are identified as Marketable Skills Achievers and complete at least six semester credit hours in a workforce program will have a cumulative GPA of at least 2.00 when they leave ACC.	Non-degree seeking students are those students who indicate on the initial application that (1) their educational objective at time of entry is "Take selected courses" (question 4) and (2) their primary reason for attending ACC is "To improve skill for my present job" or To prepare for a future job immediately after attending ACC" (question 2).

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2. Graduates from workforce programs will find employment in jobs related to their fields of study.		
2A. Associate Degree recipients	Within one year of graduation, 85% of AAS degree recipients will be employed in a job that is directly or closely related to their field of study, or will be continuing their education.	Annual surveys of graduates within one year of graduation and THECB data (if available).
2B. Certificate recipients	Within one year of graduation, 85% of certificate recipients will be employed in a job that indirectly or closely related to their field of study or will be continuing their education.	Annual surveys of graduates within one year of graduation, and THECB data (if available).

Academic Programs Transfer Effectiveness Measures

Purpose: To prepare students for successful college or university Transfer
Approved by President's Effectiveness Council, October 1998

Intended Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Methodology
1. Transfer Rate		
1A. First-time in College (FTIC) students who have earned at least 15 credit hours in baccalaureate transfer courses will transfer to a four-year college or university within four years of their initial enrollment.	ACC's transfer rate for FTIC students with a declared major in a transfer program will be higher than the state average transfer rate.	Comparison of ACC and statewide FTIC transfer rates as published in the THECB *Community College Transfer Rate Study*.
1B. Minority FTIC students who have earned at least 15 credit hours in baccalaureate transfer courses will transfer to a four-year college or university within four years of their initial enrollment.	ACC's transfer rate for minority FTIC students with a declared major in a transfer program will be higher than the state average transfer rate.	Comparison of ACC and statewide FTIC transfer rates as published in the THECB *Community College Transfer Rate Study*.
2. Transfer Intent Fulfillment		
2A. First-time students who indicate an intent to transfer and who have earned at least 15 credit hours in baccalaureate transfer courses will transfer to a four-year college or university within six years of their initial enrollment.	65% of first-time students who indicate an intent to transfer and who have earned at least 15 credit hours in baccalaureate transfer courses will transfer to a four-year college or university within six years.	Longitudinal analysis of student intent data collected from student applications.
2B. Minority first-time students who indicate an intent to transfer and who have earned at least 15 credit hours in baccalaureate transfer courses will transfer to a four-year college or university within six years of their initial enrollment.	65% of minority first-time students who indicate an intent to transfer and who have earned at least 15 credit hours in baccalaureate transfer courses will transfer to a four-year college or university within six years.	Longitudinal analysis of student intent data collected from student applications.
3. Success at the Transfer Institution		
3A. ACC Students who transfer will be in good academic standing at the transfer institution.	70% or more of ACC transfer students will be in good academic standing at the transfer institution.	Analysis of transfer data from transfer institutions including UT at Austin, SWTSU, and TAMU.
3B. ACC students who transfer will earn GPAs comparable to other transfer students at the transfer institution.	The average GPA of ACC transfer students and other transfer students at principal transfer institutions will not be significantly different.	Analysis of transfer data from transfer institutions including UT at Austin, SWTSU, and TAMU.

Adult Education Effectiveness Measures

Purpose: To improve educational opportunities for adults who lack the level of literacy skills requisite to effective citizenship and productive employment.
Approved by President's Effectiveness Council, May 99

Intended Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Methodology
1. Completion Rate: Adults who need basic education skills necessary for literacy functioning will complete the literacy program.		
1.1. Beginning Literacy-ABE students will complete beginning level adult basic education courses.	15% of Beginning Literacy-ABE students will advance to intermediate level ABE courses.	Using data reported to the state, calculate the percent of all Beginning Literacy-ABE students who advance to the intermediate level of adult basic education courses.
1.2. Beginning Literacy-ESL students will complete beginning level adult basic education courses.	17% of Beginning Literacy-ABE students will advance to intermediate level ABE courses.	Using data reported to the state, calculate the percent of all Beginning Literacy-ESL students who advance to the intermediate level of adult basic education courses.
1.3 Beginning ABE students will complete beginning level adult basic education courses.	20% of Beginning ABE students will advance to intermediate level ABE courses.	Using data reported to the state, calculate the percent of all Beginning ABE students who advance to the intermediate level of adult basic education courses.
1.4 Beginning ESL students will complete beginning level adult basic education courses.	22% of Beginning ESL students will advance to intermediate level ABE courses.	Using data reported to the state, calculate the percent of all Beginning ESL students who advance to the intermediate level of adult basic education courses.
2. Completion Rate: Adults who complete intermediate basic education will have sufficient basic education to enable them to benefit from job training and retraining programs and obtain productive employment.		
2.1 Intermediate ABE students will complete intermediate level adult basic education courses.	23% of Intermediate ABE students will advance to advanced level ABE courses.	Using data reported to the state, calculate the percent of all Intermediate ABE students who advance to the advanced level of adult basic education courses.
2.2 Intermediate ESL students will complete intermediate level adult basic education courses.	23% of Intermediate ESL students will advance to advanced level ABE courses.	Using data reported to the state, calculate the percent of all Intermediate ESL students who advance to the advanced level of adult basic education courses.

3. Completion Rate: Adults who desire to continue their education will advance to at least the level of completion of secondary school.		
3.1. Advanced ABE students will obtain a GED.	30% of Advanced ABE students will obtain a GED.	Using data reported to the state, calculate the percent of all Advanced ABE students who obtain a GED.
3.2. Advanced ESL students will meet completion standards set by ACC's college-wide ESL Task Force.	24% of Advanced ESL students will meet completion standards set by ACC's college-wide ESL Task Force.	Using data reported to the state, calculate the percent of all Advanced ESL students who meet completion standards set by ACC's college-wide ESL Task Force.
4. Access		
4.1. Student enrollments in ABE classes will meet target numbers.	Enrollments in ABE classes will be within 5% of the target set in the grant for each level of instruction.	Using data reported to the state, compare actual enrollments in each level of instruction with target enrollments defined in the grant.
4.2. Students enrolled in ABE classes will meet eligibility criteria.	100% of students enrolled in ABE classes will meet state eligibility criteria.	Using data reported to the state, calculate percentage of students enrolled in ABE classes who meet state criteria.
4.3. Students who take ABE classes will complete the initial 12 hours of class.	80% of all students enrolled in ABE classes at ACC will complete the initial 12 hours of class.	Using data reported to the state,calculate the percent of all students enrolled in ABE classes who complete the initial 12 hours of class.

2B. Students who are required to be placed in developmental courses will complete their developmental requirements.	Baseline data will be collected to determine the rates of completion for the following groups of developmental students: those required to take one Developmental Course; those required to take two Developmental courses; those required to take three Developmental courses.	Using internally generated reports, determine the completion rates by group.
2C. There will be no significant differences between developmental program completion rates by demographic group.	The percent of ACC students who complete all required developmental course work will not be significantly different between demographic groups.	Using internally generated reports, compare developmental completion rates by demographic group.
3. Course Completion Rates		
3. Students who are required to be placed in developmental courses will complete their courses at rates similar to those taking credit courses.	Course completion rates for developmental courses will be within ±5% of that for credit courses.	Using internally generated reports, compare the average course completion rate for developmental courses with that of credit courses.
4. Developmental to Credit Migration Rates		
4A Students who successfully complete Developmental Writing will be successful in the next credit-level English course.	4A.1 Based on data from the student database, at least 75% of students who complete Writing Skills II with a grade of "C" or better and who take ENGL 1301 within two years, will complete ENGL 1301 with a grade of "C" or better.	4.1a Each semester identify cohorts of students who complete Writing Skills II with a grade of "C" or better, starting in Fall 1997. Each semester thereafter, track the cohort enrollment in ENGL 1301. Calculate the percentage of those who complete ENGL 1301 with a grade of "C" or better within two years of their completion of Writing Skills II.
	4A.2 Students who complete Writing Skills II with a "C" or better and take English Comp I or English Comp II within two years will have course grades similar to that of all students taking these courses.	Each year, the average course grades of students enrolled in English Comp I or English Comp II who completed Writing Skills II with a "C" or better will be within ±0.3 of all students taking these courses.
4B. Students who successfully complete Developmental Reading will be successful in the next credit-level course.	4B.1 At least 75% of students who complete Reading Skills II with a "C" or better will complete a course designated to meet TASP guidelines (see list below) with a grade of "C" or better.	The grades of at least 75% of the students who complete Reading Skills II with a "C" or better and who take a course designated to meet TASP guidelines (see below for list) within 2 years will be a "C" or better.
	4B.2. Students who complete Reading Skills II with a "C" or better and take a course designated to meet TASP guidelines (see list below) will have course grades similar to that of all students taking these courses.	Each year, the average course grades of students enrolled in a course designated to meet TASP guidelines (see list below) who completed Reading Skills II with a "C" or better will be within ±0.3 of all students taking these courses.

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4C. Students who successfully complete Developmental Mathematics will be successful in the next credit-level math course.	4C.1 At least 75% of students who complete the highest level of Developmental with a "C" or better will complete College Algebra or Trigonometry or Topics in Mathematics with a grade of "C" or better.	The grades of at least 75% of the students who complete the highest level of Developmental Math with a "C" or better and who take College Algebra or Trigonometry or Topics in Mathematics within 2 years will be a "C" or better.
	4C.2 Students who complete the highest level of Developmental with a "C" or better and take College Algebra or Trigonometry or Topics in Mathematics will have course grades similar to that of all students taking these courses.	Each year, the average course grades of students enrolled in College Algebra or Trigonometry or Topics in Mathematics who completed the highest level of Developmental Math with a "C" or better will be within ±0.3 of all students taking these courses.

Reading
GOVT 2305 (U.S. Government)
GOVT 2306 (Texas State and Local Government)
ENGL 2322 (British Literature I)
ENGL 2323 (British Literature II)
ENGL 2327 (American Literature I)
ENGL 2328 (American Literature II)
ENGL 2332 (World Literature I)
ENGL 2333 (World Literature II)
HIST 1301 (U.S. History I, self-paced)
HIST 1302 (U.S. History II, self-paced)

4C. Students who successfully complete Developmental Mathematics will be successful in the next credit-level math course.	4C.1 At least 75% of students who complete the highest level of Developmental with a "C" or better will complete College Algebra or Trigonometry or Topics in Mathematics with a grade of "C" or better.	The grades of at least 75% of the students who complete the highest level of Developmental Math with a "C" or better and who take College Algebra or Trigonometry or Topics in Mathematics within 2 years will be a "C" or better.
	4C.2 Students who complete the highest level of Developmental with a "C" or better and take College Algebra or Trigonometry or Topics in Mathematics will have course grades similar to that of all students taking these courses.	Each year, the average course grades of students enrolled in College Algebra or Trigonometry or Topics in Mathematics who completed the highest level of Developmental Math with a "C" or better will be within ±0.3 of all students taking these courses.

Reading
GOVT 2305 (U.S. Government)
GOVT 2306 (Texas State and Local Government)
ENGL 2322 (British Literature I)
ENGL 2323 (British Literature II)
ENGL 2327 (American Literature I)
ENGL 2328 (American Literature II)
ENGL 2332 (World Literature I)
ENGL 2333 (World Literature II)
HIST 1301 (U.S. History I, self-paced)
HIST 1302 (U.S. History II, self-paced)

Student Services Effectiveness Measures

Purpose: To provide exemplary programs that support the teaching/learning process and to increase opportunities for students to define and reach their educational goals.
Approved by President's Effectiveness Council February, 1999.

Intended Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Methodology
1. Enrollment		
The unduplicated headcount enrollment of ACC will reflect the diversity of the college age population the College serves.	the percent of ACC students from each demographic group will be within ±5% of their proportion in the service area college age population.	Compare THECB demographic data on the service area population and the fall unduplicated headcount enrollment of ACC students.
2. Applicants		
The applicants who register and attend ACC will reflect the demographics of the applicant pool.	At least 75% of each demographic group represented in the applicant pool will actually enroll.	Compare demographic data from the yearly applicant pool and the annual enrollment of first time at ACC students.
3. Financial Aid		
ACC will provide financial aid opportunities to students who demonstrate the most need.	At least 50% of the students who receive Pell Grants will have an Expected Family Contribution (EFC) of zero (0).	Analysis of data from the Federal Pell Grant Program *Student Payment Summary.*
4. Loan Default Rate		
The college will maintain a loan default rate 5% below the maximum threshold required by law.	The College's loan default rate, as calculated by the Default Management Division of the Department of Education, will be at least 5% less than the federally defined maximum threshold.	Analysis of data from the Department of Education's Default Management Division's *Annual Report* to ACC.

Retention Effectiveness Measures

Purpose: To provide consistent, campus-wide programs and services that increase the likelihood that students will remain in college and complete their degree or certificate program.
DRAFT

Intended Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Methodology
1. Fall-to-Spring Retention Rates		
1A. First-Time in College (FTIC) degree seeking students enrolled at ACC in the fall semester will return the following spring semester (Fall-to-Spring Retention).	The percentage of FTIC degree seeking students enrolled in the fall semester who return the following spring semester will be higher than the state average.	Using THECB *Annual Data Profile* report, compare ACC and statewide average Fall-to-Spring retention rates.
1B. There will be no significant differences between ACC and statewide average Fall-to-Spring retention rates for FTIC degree or certificate seeking stu-	For each demographic group, the percent of FTIC students enrolled in the fall semester who return the following spring semester will be within ±5% of their proportion statewide.	Using data from the THECB *Annual Data Profile* report, compare ACC and statewide average Fall-to-Spring retention rates by demographic group.
2. Fall-to-Fall Retention Rates		
2A. Students enrolled at ACC in the fall semester will return the following fall semester (Fall-to-Fall Retention).	The percentage of ACC students enrolled in the fall semester who return the following fall semester will be higher than the state average.	Using THECB *Student Migration* report, compare ACC and statewide average Fall-to-Fall retention rates.
2B. There will be no significant differences between ACC and statewide average Fall-to-Fall retention rates by demographic group.	For each demographic group, the percent of ACC students enrolled in the fall semester who return the following fall semester will be within ±5% of their proportion statewide.	Using data from the THECB *Student Migration* report, compare ACC and statewide average Fall-to-Fall retention rates by demographic group.
3. Completion Rates		
3A. FTIC degree or certificate-seeking students will complete their degree or certificate within three years.	Three-year completion rates of FTIC degree-seeking students will be at least 5% above the state average.	Using data from the THECB *Annual Data Profile* report, compare ACC and statewide average completion rates.
3B. There will be no significant differences between ACC and statewide degree or certificate completion rates of FTIC students by demographic group.	For each demographic group, the percent of FTIC students who complete a degree or certificate will be within ±5% of their proportion statewide.	Using data from the THECB *Annual Data Profile* report, compare ACC and statewide completion rates by demographic group.

Continuing Education Programs Effectiveness Measures

Purpose: The purpose of Continuing Education is to provide courses and training to all individuals who wish to improve their job, career, or personal skills.
DRAFT

Intended Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Methodology
1. Students who take continuing education courses will be satisfied with those courses.	1a. Based on data provided by the continuing education "Program Evaluation" forms, the mean "overall course" rating will be no lower than 4 on a scale of 1= lowest to 5= highest for 80% of all continuing education courses evaluated.	1a. At the end of each fiscal year, ratings for the item, "Overall Rating of Course" will be averaged for each course (sum of ratings/total number of evaluations). The percentage of all courses receiving at least a mean (average) of 4 on this item will be calculated.
	1b. Based on data provided by the continuing education "Program Evaluation" forms, the mean rating of the item, "The content assisted me in achieving my personal objectives." will be no lower than 4 on a scale of 1= lowest to 5= highest for 80% of all continuing education courses evaluated.	1b. At the end of each fiscal year, ratings for the item, "The content assisted me in achieving my personal objectives" will be averaged for each course (sum of ratings/total number of evaluations). The percentage of all courses receiving at least a mean (average) of 4 on this item will be calculated.
2. Employers who contract for ACC Customized Training will be satisfied with the training their employees receive.	2a. Based on data provided by the Customized Training "Company Evaluation" forms, the mean rating of the item, "The knowledge/skills acquired in the seminar will be valuable to our employees." will be no lower than 4 on a scale of 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree.	2a. At the end of each fiscal year, ratings for the item, "The knowledge/skills acquired in the seminar will be valuable to our employees" will be averaged (sum of ratings/total number of evaluations).
	2b. Based on data provided by the Customized Training "Company Evaluation" forms, the mean rating of the item, "The seminar/course objectives were met" will be no lower than 4 on a scale of 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree.	2b. At the end of each fiscal year, ratings for the item, "The seminar/course objectives were met " will be averaged (sum of ratings/total number of evaluations).
3. Students taking continuing education courses to meet licensure requirements will meet those requirements.	Based on data collected by the annual continuing education satisfaction survey, 80% of students reporting they took the continuing education course to meet licensure requirements will also report they met those requirements.	Each year the OIE will conduct a survey of students who have registered for continuing education classes. Results on the items related to this criterion will be tabulated, and percentages will be calculated.

Assessment Plan Template

Effectiveness Measures Key Questions

Purpose:

- Why does the program exist?
- What does the program provide students?
- What can students expect to "get" from this program?
- What is the major "task" of this program?

Intended Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Methodology
What results will be achieved? What will students be able to do? What will students know? What skills will students have acquired? What impact will the program have on students and the community?	Who will demonstrate results? When will results be demonstrated? What specific behavior or action will demonstrate results? Under what conditions will results be demonstrated? What level of achievement is acceptable to identify success?	Which data will be collected? Who is responsible for data collection? When will the data be collected? What "vehicle" will be used for collecting data? How will the data be analyzed? How will the results be reported?
Summary and Analysis of Data	**Improvement Actions**	**Impact**
What did you find out? Were the criteria met? What problems need to be addressed? What successes were identified?	What will you do next? What changes need to be made? What other data is needed to make improvements? What budgetary resources are needed to make improvements?	How has the program changed as a result of improvement actions?

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Austin Community College Instructional Units
Effectiveness Measures for _____ Program

Purpose: The purpose of our program is

_____

_____

Intended Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Methodology
Data Summary and Analysis	**Improvement Actions**	**Impact**

3.1 Planning and Evaluation: Educational Programs

from *Criteria for Accreditation*, Section III Institutional Effectiveness
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)
Reprinted by permission of Dr. James Rogers, COC Executive Director

Educational activities of an institution include teaching, research and public service. Planning and evaluation for these activities **must** be systematic, broad based, interrelated and appropriate to the institution. The institution **must** define its expected educational results and describe its methods for analyzing the results. The institution **must**

1. Establish a clearly defined purpose appropriate to collegiate education
2. Formulate educational goals consistent with the institution's purpose
3. Develop and implement procedures to evaluate the extent to which these educa tional goals are being achieved
4. Use the results of these evaluations to improve educational programs, services and operations.

The institution **must** develop guidelines and procedures to evaluate educational effectiveness, including the quality of student learning and of research and service. This evaluation **must** encompass educational goals at all levels and research and service functions of the institution. The evaluation of academic programs should involve gathering and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data that demonstrate student achievement.

Measures to evaluate academic programs and general education may include the following:

- Evaluation of instructional delivery
- Adequacy of facilities and equipment
- Standardized tests
- Analysis of theses, portfolios, and recitals
- Completion rates
- Results of admissions tests for students applying to graduate or professional schools
- Job placement rates
- Results of licensing examinations
- Evaluations by employers
- Follow-up studies of alumni
- And performance of student transfers at receiving institutions

The institution **must** evaluate its success with respect to student achievement in relation to purpose, including, as appropriate, consideration of course completion, state licensing examinations, and job placement rates.

Outcomes Assessment and SACS

From *Resource Manual on Institutional Effectiveness*
Commission on Colleges, The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Reprinted by permission of Dr. James Rogers, COC Executive Director

"We believe strongly that it is both proper and educationally sound to require that an accredited institution state its goals, develop methods by which the achievement of these goals can be evaluated, demonstrate that the evaluative information received is utilized in the planning process, and finally, use the results of these evaluations to improve educational programs, services and operations."

James T. Rogers, Executive Director Commission on Colleges
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

The following are excerpts and page references from the SACS *Resource Manual on Institutional Effectiveness.*

The Evolving Process of Accreditation

"...the institutional effectiveness criteria are designed to encourage the establishment of an internal planning and evaluation system through which institutional self-examination becomes a continuous process rather than a periodic event." p. iii

"...the institution and each of its units has clearly articulated goals, means for evaluating achievement of those goals, and processes for using the results of evaluation in work toward institutional improvement." p. iv

"Ultimately, of course, the greatest benefit of an emphasis on institutional effectiveness should be the continuing improvement of quality in educational programs and services for students...." p. v

Assumptions

"The assessment of institutional effectiveness essentially involves systematic, explicit, and documented comparison of institutional performance to institutional purpose." p. 2

"...the primary shared focus is upon the educational program and services provided for students.....the critical issues for the foreseeable future are certain to include the question of whether and to what extent colleges are producing more competent students." p. 2

"Though effectiveness measures will vary across different levels and components of a college...the processes used for recording and reporting data should be consistent, and the entire effort should be systematic in nature." p. 2

"...both qualitative and quantitative means for evaluation should be employed as appropriate. Neither is preferred, but the use of only quantitative or only qualitative evaluation procedures would likely diminish the effort." p. 2

"Worthy of final emphasis is the fundamental assumption that systematic self-

examination of institutional effectiveness will enhance the quality of decision-making in the institution, eventually improving the quality of teaching, scholarship, public service, and the overall educational experience of students." p. 3

An Analysis of Criteria, Section III: Institutional Effectiveness

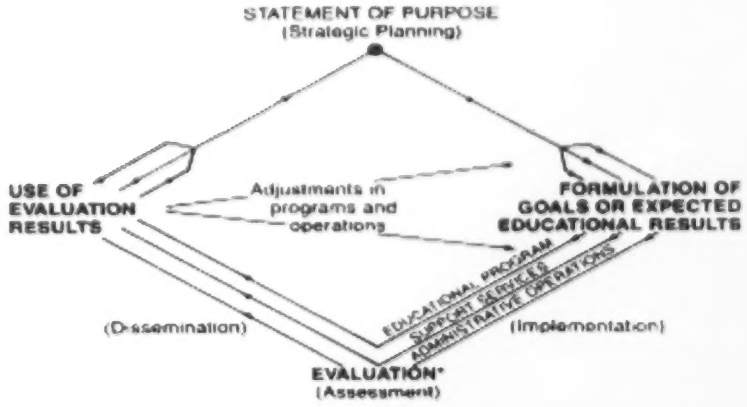
"...procedures used in planning and evaluation should be systematic, comprehensive, and clearly related to the purpose and goals of the institution." p. 4

"Each institution is required to state its expectations regarding the important results of the educational process and then to describe the methods that will be used in discovering the extent to which those expectations are realized...and the description of methods for ascertaining results should include information as to how, where, when, and by whom the assessment effort will be accomplished." p.4

" ...an institution must

1. ...establish a clearly defined purpose appropriate to collegiate education;
2. formulate educational goals consistent with the institution's purpose;
3. develop and implement procedures for evaluating the extent to which these educational goals are being achieved; and
4. use the results of these evaluations to improve educational programs, services and operations."

Components of a Planning and Evaluation Process



*includes the identification and administration of assessment procedures

"...the graphic illustration may create the impression of a linear process wherein one neatly-packaged set of activities follows another in established sequence. The reality is, of course, that both institutions and the individuals who work in them are likely to be involved simultaneously in evaluating yesterday's results, grappling with today's problems, and planning for tomorrow's possibilities. The processes described are therefore understood to be dynamic and interactive." p. 5

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Statement of Purpose

"While a statement of institutional purpose need not reach an operational level of detail, it should include substance sufficient to provide a clear sense of direction for the institution and an explicit framework for subsequent statements of goals and expected educational results." p. 6

"...a clear statement of purpose describes in general terms the desired results of the ...program...." p. 7

Formulation of Goals/Definition of Expected Educational Results

"...the achievement of stated goals must be ascertainable. Consequently, institutions should use clear and explicit language when describing their goals. Explicit statements use concrete language and action verbs. General adjectives and adverbs are noticeably absent, with operational phrases or clauses in their place." p. 8

Evaluation

"There has been no more sensitive or more essential aspect of the College Commission's institutional effectiveness initiative than the emphasis on assessment.....The institution's task is to identify the specific means of evaluating each of the significant goals...." p. 9

"In describing both expected results and evaluation procedures, institutions should strive not only to use explicit language but also

1. to specify appropriate time frames (e.g., for periodic assessment for achievement of particular goals over several years, etc.);
2. to address both minimum standards and targets for excellence;
3. to indicate at what level (e.g., program, department, division, institution, etc.) the assessment will be conducted and used; and
4. to designate responsibility for implementing evaluation and for ensuring appropriate use of evaluation results.

Use of Results

"Following review and discussion of evaluative findings, the institution and/or its appropriate units should determine the use of significant findings in improving programs and operations." p. 10

"In the absence of commitment to use evaluation results, all previous steps in the planning and evaluation process would become little more than futile exercises

which an institution can ill afford, and the institution's planning and evaluation process could not be considered adequate." p.10

"During the process for reaffirmation of accreditation, each institution should be able to identify any substantial discrepancies between statements of purpose and goals and the results of assessment and to indicate steps planned or taken to address those discrepancies." p. 10